

# Indian Education in the State of Nevada

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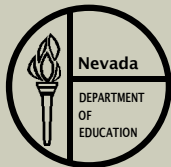
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## NDE Vision & Mission:

**Vision:** "Each student will achieve Nevada's expectations for learning."

**Mission:** "The Nevada Department of Education provides leadership, resources, assistance and oversight, in partnership with school districts and others, to support student achievement and future success."



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## Welcome from the Indian Education Consultant

*Submitted by Fredina Drye-Romero, Indian Education Consultant,  
Nevada Department of Education*

In the midst of preparing for the first annual American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) Summit we missed the winter issue! Nevertheless, I have been keeping an eye on all the great things that are occurring in the State.

There is so much to write about, but for this issue you will be pleased to read an article titled, "We Shall Remain," written by Sharon Frederick and how our "like-minded efforts" are reflected in the improvement of test scores for American Indian students. The Clark County School District (CCSD) Indian Education Opportunities Program reflects on the High School Graduation Program and the Student Recognition Night. The Washoe Tribe is pleased to announce the six recipients who received the tribe's incentive awards! At

the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), the Native America Alumni Chapter and the Center for Student Cultural Diversity honored two graduates and recognized scholarship recipients at the graduation reception. Also, read about the Native American course "Bridging the Traditional and Modern Words" that was taught at UNR. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) welcomed students from six tribal colleges who attend the American Indian Summer Institute in June. Read about a freshman student who is thinking about obtaining a doctorate degree! Students will be excited to read about a scholarship from the Sierra Nevada College and an opportunity to attend the UNITY Conference in Reno!

It's been wonderful working with such dedicated colleagues! Thank you!



## "We Shall Remain" \* Submitted by Sharon Frederick

*Member, Nevada State Board of Education, Representing District 1 and  
Commissioner, Nevada Indian Commission*

I was approached by a constituent who questioned me about the status of Indian Education in Nevada and throughout the United States. Specifically, he wanted information on recent accomplishments, future goals, and what strategic plans are in place for moving forward. Even though our 6,810 Nevada American Indian students represent a small subgroup (out of 433,885 statewide student total) and are being instructed by 251 Native American educators (out of 28,046 statewide total), I was able to reassure this concerned citizen that coalition networks do exist. They exist between all levels of national, state, and local educators and we are focused on improving graduation rates, decreasing dropout rates, reduction of suspensions and expulsions, recruitment and training of Native American educators, and

improvement in the seamless transition to post-secondary education or career and technical training.

Many of you are familiar with the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) but are you aware that the President of the American Library Association, Dr. Lorie Roy, is Anishinabe, enrolled member of the White Earth Reservation, and a member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe? She has held a long-standing commitment to developing and promoting library services and cultural heritage initiatives with and for indigenous populations. She

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\* "We Shall Remain" – a Public Broadcast System (PBS) series focusing on American Indian culture.

## American Indian/Alaskan Native Education Summit

*Submitted by Fredina Drye-Romero, Indian Education Consultant*

One hundred and twenty six participants registered to attend the first American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) Education Summit put on by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), in partnership with the Nevada Indian Commission (NIC), the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), and the Southwest Comprehensive Center (SWCC) at WestEd. The Summit was initially intended to attract teams of individuals from each of the seventeen school districts in Nevada, the twenty-six tribes in Nevada, American Indian organizations throughout the state and Nevada's post-secondary institutions. Higher education institutions sent representatives from the UNR; the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV); Truckee Meadows Community College; Great Basin College; Western Nevada College and College of Southern Nevada.

Opening remarks from Dr. Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction, NDE, and Sherry Rupert, NIC Executive Director, set the stage for what participants would hear throughout the day and a half summit. Marty Montgomery, Teacher Assistant at Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School, from the Douglas County School District (DCSD) sang an Honor song and Reynelda James, Teacher of Great Basin Native Language, from the Washoe County School District (WCSD), opened the event with a blessing in the Northern Paiute language.

Some influential speakers were invited, which included our opening keynote speaker, Deb Harry, Executive Director for Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism and from the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe. Her speech focused on Indigenous-

Centered Education: Nurturing the Next Generation of Indigenous Leadership. Roy Casey, Director for the Western Nevada Regional Training Programs (WN RTP), facilitated a workshop for participants by using current and historical student achievement data for the American Indian population. Together, Lynn Manning, (WCSD) and Lori Pasqua, Washoe Tribe, facilitated a panel between the WCSD and DCSD and the tribes within the two districts. The panelist described how partnering and collaborating has helped in implementing programming across both districts.



### **Eagle Wings Pageant Group**

Later that evening, Arlan Melendez, Chairman of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, introduced the Eagle Wings Pageant Group, who provided traditional Paiute songs and dances. The evening ended with Denny Hurtado, Director of the Washington State Office of Indian Education and an enrolled member of the Skokomish Indian Tribe giving a presentation on Washington state's Culturally Appropriate Reading Curriculum.

The next day was equally satisfying, Antoinette Cavanaugh, Elko County School District (ECSD), Superintendent and a member of the Duck Valley Shoshone Paiute Tribe presented data specific to Nevada. The data reflected on the performance rates of Native American students on areas of assessments, as well as on graduation rates at the high school and college level. Sherry Rupert and Pam

Ambercrombie, Yerington Paiute Tribal Education Director, introduced the NIC Indian Education Advisory Committee's draft of a strategic plan for AI/AN students in Nevada. Dr. Cornel Pewewardy presented *culturally responsive teaching* for American Indian students. Dr. Pewewardy described it as, "relying on the development of certain dispositions toward learners and a holistic approach to curriculum and instruction." The morning was concluded with a presentation by Drs. Homa Anooshehpour, Kulwadee Axtell, and Ms. Fredina Drye-Romero, NDE Consultants who presented the Nevada Indian student performance results on Nevada statewide assessment programs. Kari Emm, Outreach and Retention Coordinator, UNR and Karen Francis-Begay, American Indian Affairs, University of Arizona facilitated a roundtable discussion on higher education. This interactive workshop explored the cultural context in which campus recruiters and retention specialists need to be familiar with to best serve students who self-identify as AI/AN.

The Summit was a success and demonstrated the need to build collaboration between the school districts, schools, and tribal communities. There is also a need to establish a strong academic plan to increase the academic achievement for AI/AN.

The NDE would like to acknowledge and thank the SWCC for their assistance in making Nevada's first AI/AN Education Summit a success! The idea for a summit in Nevada first arose after attending the SWCC Regional Summit in New Mexico.

We believe the Summit in March has set the stage for next year!

## Clark County School District

### Indian Education Opportunities Program

#### High School Graduation Program

The Clark County School District (CCSD), Indian Education Opportunities Program held their annual high school graduation program on Thursday, April 24 at the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe's Golf Resort. Fifty-three American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) seniors were invited to attend this year's program. Students eligible for Title VII services were honored for their high school graduation accomplishments.

Terry Medina, of the Fatherhood is Sacred Program, spoke on family responsibility, and Ahiddabah Marie Tsinnie, a CCSD teacher, spoke on her experience as a bi-cultural Native student growing up in the urban area and her struggle to find her identity.

Students received medallions reflecting a graduation cap from Senator John Ensign's office representative, Kathy Ambrosio. Parents presented their children's accomplishments and goals.

They expressed their pride in their children and gave the graduates words of wisdom. The program consisted of a luncheon and recognition program sponsored by the district's Student Support Services Division.

#### Student Recognition Night

The district's Equity and Diversity Education Department along with the Indian Education Opportunities Program and the Indian Education Committee held a Student Recognition Night on May 28, 2008, at the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe meeting room. Twenty-nine CCSD AI/AN students from grades K-12 were honored. Parents and guardians submitted two achievements they wanted to recognize the students for throughout the 2007-2008 school year. Recognition could be for academic achievement, academic improvement, attendance, citizenship, athletic participation, community/cultural involvement, as well as other unique accomplishments. Students received both certificate and

lapel pins for their achievements.

The Department also recognized the students and their accomplishments as well as the families and their support of the students' efforts. Charles Masoka, College of Southern Nevada, Recruitment and Retention Specialist, and Chris Santos, Las Vegas Indian Center Prevention Specialist, both spoke about their respective programs and opportunities for Native American youth and adults. Kyle Ethelbah, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) of the Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach, and Marchella Cruz, 2007-08 Miss White Mountain Apache, shared personal stories with the students and their families, in addition to traditional songs and words of praise and encouragement to the students and their families.

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*(Continued from Pg.1 "We Shall Remain")*

founded and directs "If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything," a national reading club for Native children, and "Honoring Generations," a graduate scholarship program for indigenous students.

This top down effort is first demonstrated in Nevada with Dr. Keith Rheault, our Superintendent of Public Instruction, currently serving on the Native American Student Education Committee for the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the continued support for our Indian Education Consultant, Fredina Drye-Romero. The two universities and five colleges of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) are also on board. Many of Nevada's seventeen school districts have designated staff devoted

primarily to Indian Education. The first statewide American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) Education Summit was held recently in Reno in March.

Our like-minded efforts here in Nevada have already been reflected in improving test assessments as indicated in Nevada's Report Card and clearly demonstrate the results of our combined focus and momentum towards the goals of a quality education for Nevada's Native American student population. The Red Road to education has not been easy on the moccasins, but many now realize the sustainable benefits of being a lifelong learner and support our continuing labors toward this end.

*"Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail" - Ralph Waldo Emerson*

### Washoe Tribe Incentive Awards

The Washoe Tribe is proud to announce that six Washoe tribal college students received incentive scholarship awards for earning a 3.0 GPA or higher, while being full-time students during the 2007-08 academic year! This scholarship is tribal administered and is based on merit, not financial need.

**Congratulations to the following Washoe Tribal Students:** Trina Wyatt, Nursing major at Western Nevada College; Jamie Dressler, Speech and Hearing Science major at the Univ. of Utah; Patrick Burt, Computer Science major at Sierra Nevada College; Pauline John, Accounting major at California State University; Theresa Florez, Business Administration major at Morrison University; and Gilbert Sam, Welding at Montana Tech.



## 🍏 University of Nevada, Reno, Submitted by Kari Emm

On May 7, 2008 the Native American Alumni Chapter and the Center for Student Cultural Diversity sponsored a Native American graduation reception. Two graduates were honored at the reception Sarah Davalt, BS-BA Accounting and Christa Hecht, BA Journalism.



Also during the reception scholarship recipients were awarded. Justina Benner, Walker River Paiute Tribe and Brittney Santos, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe were both awarded a \$500 scholarship from the Native American Alumni Chapter.



Tyler English from the Walker River Paiute Tribe was awarded the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology, and Natural Resources (CABNR) \$5,000 annual scholarship for four years. Heidi Emm was also awarded a \$1,000 scholarship by CABNR. Attendees at the event were UNR, faculty, alumni, family, and friends.



UNR Students. Stewart Facilities

## 🍏 University of Nevada, Las Vegas

*American Indian Summer Research Institute, Kyle Ethelbah*

Students from Ft. Peck Community College, Stone Child College, Fond du Lac Tribal College, and Bay Mills Community College began a two-week American Indian Ethno Science Summer Institute in June. The primary objective of the summer institute is to introduce individuals from tribally controlled colleges and

universities throughout the United States to the field of Public Health as it relates to the surveillance of disease in American Indian communities. Participants will be introduced to general theories of epidemiology and surveillance with respect to American Indian communities.

## 🍏 Spring 2008 Course Taught at UNR

*Submitted by Kari Emm & Fredina Drye-Romero*

In the 2008 Spring semester the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) offered one of their first courses in Native American Studies. The title of the course was "Native Americans: Bridging the Traditional and Modern Worlds (ETS 307). The course explored the past and present successes and challenges experienced by Native Americans as they dance between two worlds. It addressed the accompanying losses and gains, including the impact of historical and current racism, discrimination, and prejudice."

Through the class students were able to study the eras of American Indians, starting with the Boarding School era up through current issues. The course provided presenters to come and speak about personal stories and research. Such presenters were; Aletha Tom who shared her experience of being a student at Stewart Indian School from 8th grade until her 1965 graduation. Students also had an opportunity to visit the Stewart Facilities, formally known as the Stewart Indian Boarding School. Sherry Rupert, Nevada Indian Commission (NIC), Executive Director, gave a tour of the facilities. She educated the students on the history of the school, from the beginning years to the later years after the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Another presenter was Fred Drye, Bureau of Indian Affairs. He gave an overview of Self-Determination and Sovereignty. He also gave some personal insight to the structure of tribal government. Other

presenters were Staci Emm, UNR Cooperative Extension who provided a very interactive discussion on treaties, executive order and water rights. Pam Abercrombie, Yerington Paiute Education Director provided an in-depth look at Nevada's History. Randy Emm, Cooperative Extension Coordinator for Indian Education Programs, was the final presenter. His presentation was themed "What is an Indian?" The topic allowed students to start thinking how our future generations will be affected by the question of what constitutes being "American Indian?"

One of the final projects for the class was a presentation made by each student. The assignments were to outline what they had learned, followed with a future plan. Family members and five Pyramid Lake students attended the presentations made by the students.

A final reflection was also assigned to the class for evaluation purposes. The overall comments from the class were that they hoped the course would continue. They believed that all students both Native and non-Native should be able to learn about the history of American Indians. Additionally, they would like to see others uphold traditions and teachings passed down from the elders.

## College Information Center

### Northern Nevada Financial Aid Contact Information:

#### University of Nevada, Reno Student Financial Aid & Scholarships

Ph: (775) 784-4666  
Fx: (775) 784-1025

#### University of Nevada, Reno Intertribal Higher Ed. Program Kari Emm

Ph: (775) 784-4936  
Fx: (775) 784-1402

#### Western Nevada College: Financial Assistance Office

Ph: (775) 445-3264  
Fx: (775) 445-3058

#### Truckee Meadows Community College: Financial Aid, Scholarship & Student Employment Center

Ph: (775) 673-7072  
Fx: (775) 674-7566

#### Great Basin College: Student Financial Services

Ph: (775) 753-2399  
Fx: (775) 753-2390

#### For updated Tribal Contact Information:

<http://www.indiancommission.state.nv.us/documents/2007/NewTribalChairList3.pdf>

## McDermitt High School Successes!

News from McDermitt Combined School: As the school year comes to a close we would like to highlight our senior class as a class in which 100% have passed all graduation requirements, including their proficiency testing, and graduated on Wednesday June 4, 2008 in the McDermitt New Gymnasium. All eight Native American graduates have indicated they plan to attend college in the fall. Several will be attending Great Basin College in Elko, one qualified for a WEU scholarship to attend Boise State University, and one has inspiration to attend UNR. This was an outstanding academic group of students as supported by McDermitt High School being selected as Exemplary Status by the Nevada Department of Education, the only public high school in Nevada to receive this award. Great job seniors and good luck in your future endeavors.

## Student goes to College on Scholarships

*Submitted by Justina Benner*

Ha u (hello in Paiute), my name is Justina Benner. I am a 17-year-old high school senior at Yerington High School and a member of the Walker River Paiute Tribe. I have lived in Schurz for 12 years.

My hobbies include beading, schoolwork, hanging out with my friends, and attending powwows, where I am a jingle dress dancer. I currently reign as Miss Walker River and was crowned at the Walker River Pinenut Festival in September of 2007. I am serving my second term. Throughout my high school years, I have been a member of the Native American Club for 3 years, Honor Society for 2 years, and served as a Link Crew Mentor for 1 year. (*Link*

*Crew is a mentoring program for freshman.*)

I have always enjoyed school and kept my grades up, averaging between a 3.8 and a 4.0 GPA. I was recently accepted to the University of Nevada, Reno into the College of Business. I plan on majoring in finance.

I received a University of Nevada (UNR) Native American Alumni Chapter Scholarship. I am also a recipient of the Bill and Melinda Gates Scholars Scholarship. I was one of 1,000 chosen out of a field of 13,000 applicants. With these scholarships I plan on paying my way through college to eventually receive a doctorate degree.

## Sierra Nevada College (SNC) Scholarship

SNC will award a full tuition scholarship starting in fall 2008!

All completed applications and official transcripts should be sent to:

State of Nevada Indian Commission  
Native American Scholarship Awards  
5366 Snyder Ave.  
Carson City, NV 89701

For an explanation sheet, which outline the terms and conditions for issuance

and renewal of scholarship, contact the NIC Office at (775) 687-8333.

**Application deadline is July 3, 2008!**

Recipients will be notified no later than July 11, 2008.

Apply for Financial Aid through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) SNC's federal code is 009192

Admission office: (775) 831-1314 Ext. 7411

Financial Aid Office: (775) 831-1314 Ext. 7404

## United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) Conference, held in Reno, NV – July 13-15, 2008

The "Biggest Little City in the World," has been selected as the site for the 2008 National UNITY Conference. The Grand Sierra Resort, located in Reno, Nevada, will host the annual conference, which will begin Friday afternoon, July 11 and adjourn Tuesday morning, July 15. "American Indian, Alaska Native, and other

Indigenous youth and youth council advisors will convene for the five-day event which will include teambuilding, challenging messages, leadership and personal development workshops, cultural exchange, talent show, sports and fitness activities, banquet, dance, and closing commitment ceremony."

- <http://www.unityinc.org>

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